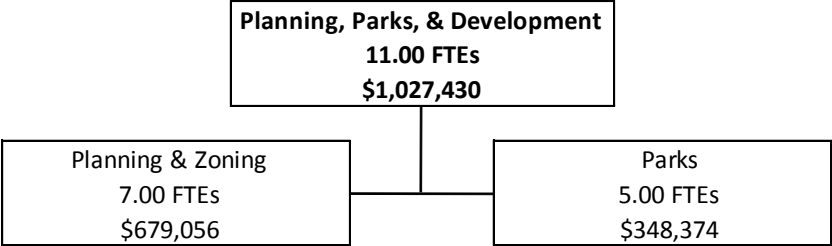


**Catawba County Government**



# Planning, Parks, & Development

Summary

|                             | 2006/07<br>Actual | 2007/08<br>Current | 2008/09<br>Requested | 2008/09<br>Approved | Percent<br>Change |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Revenues</b>             |                   |                    |                      |                     |                   |
| Charges & Fees              | \$91,659          | \$76,030           | \$87,020             | \$86,520            | 14%               |
| Miscellaneous               | 470               | 300                | 800                  | 800                 | 167%              |
| From Other Parks            | 0                 | 0                  | 0                    | 0                   | 0%                |
| General Fund                | 797,152           | 783,092            | 941,196              | 940,110             | 20%               |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>\$889,281</b>  | <b>\$859,422</b>   | <b>\$1,029,016</b>   | <b>\$1,027,430</b>  | <b>20%</b>        |
| <b>Expenses</b>             |                   |                    |                      |                     |                   |
| Personal Services           | \$665,213         | \$667,857          | \$771,290            | \$771,290           | 15%               |
| Supplies & Operations       | 224,068           | 175,665            | 247,226              | 245,640             | 40%               |
| Capital                     | 0                 | 15,900             | 10,500               | 10,500              | -34%              |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>\$889,281</b>  | <b>\$859,422</b>   | <b>\$1,029,016</b>   | <b>\$1,027,430</b>  | <b>20%</b>        |
| <b>Expenses by Division</b> |                   |                    |                      |                     |                   |
| Planning & Zoning           | \$673,911         | \$607,575          | \$680,642            | \$679,056           | 12%               |
| Parks                       | 215,370           | 251,847            | 348,374              | 348,374             | 38%               |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>889,281</b>    | <b>859,422</b>     | <b>1,029,016</b>     | <b>1,027,430</b>    | <b>\$1</b>        |
| <b>Employees</b>            |                   |                    |                      |                     |                   |
| Permanent                   | 12.00             | 11.00              | 12.00                | 12.00               | 9%                |
| Hourly                      | 1.00              | 1.00               | 4.40                 | 4.40                | 340%              |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>13.00</b>      | <b>12.00</b>       | <b>16.40</b>         | <b>16.40</b>        | <b>37%</b>        |

## Budget Highlights

The Planning, Parks, and Development budget includes County Planning and Zoning efforts and the operation of County Parks.

### Planning

The budget funds the full WPCOG Growth Estimation Model. This study updated annually provides analysis and trend information forecasting the student population for each school within Catawba County. In alternating years a full study is conducted followed by an update the following year.

The County's Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation plan will be updated as required every 5 years in order to remain eligible for pre-disaster and post-disaster funding from FEMA.

### Parks

In accordance with the Parks Master Plan adopted by the Board of Commissioners in December 2007 and citizen demand, hours of operation are increased from 4 days per week to 6 days per week at Bakers Mountain and Riverbend Park. The County will also begin operating St. Stephens Park 4 days per week offering passive recreation opportunities including a dog park, picnic areas, and walking trails. Finally, funds are included to phase in required ADA upgrades at Mountain View Recreation Center over the next 3 years.

**Performance Measurement:*****Fiscal Year 2008/09***

Outcomes for Fiscal Year 2008/09. Plans include the following:

- Staff will continue work on a variety of long range planning committees in the areas of transportation and environmental quality and quality of life in the county in order to promote economic development.
- The Parks Division will assist in the development of the St Stephens Park facility and Bunker Hill Covered Bridge to improve accessibility and amenities at the sites.

***Fiscal Year 2007/08***

During the first half of the fiscal year, Planning, Parks & Development achieved the following:

- Staff reviewed and made appropriate recommendations within established timeframes as follows:
  - 7 rezoning applications were submitted to the Planning Board 7-10 days before the public hearing
  - 34 non-residential site plans were approved by the technical review team within 5-7 working days
  - 503 residential zoning applications were approved within 2 working days
  - 4 sketch plats, 11 preliminary plats, 7 final plats, and 4 performance guarantees were reviewed and reported to the Subdivision Review Board within 10 working days
  - 14 plats exempt from subdivision review resulting in no additional lots created and 7 resulting in new lots, 20 family subdivision plats, and 9 minor subdivision plats were reviewed within 10 working days.
- Parks staff delivered educational programming to 3096 patrons in excess of their goal of 800.

***Fiscal Year 2006/07***

During Fiscal Year 2006/07, Planning, Parks & Development achieved the following:

- Staff reviewed and made appropriate recommendations within established timeframes as follows:
  - 13 rezoning applications were submitted to the Planning Board 7-10 days before the public hearing
  - 34 non-residential site plans were approved by the technical review team within 5-7 working days
  - 1365 residential zoning applications were approved within 2 working days
  - 9 sketch plats, 11 preliminary plats, 8 final plats, and 3 performance guarantees were reviewed and reported to the Subdivision Review Board within 10 working days
  - 27 plats exempt from subdivision review resulting in no additional lots created and 6 resulting in new lots, 45 family subdivision plats, and 78 minor subdivision plats were reviewed within 10 working days.

- Code compliance staff enforced compliance with the junk vehicle and zoning ordinances for 100 junk vehicle complaints and 71 zoning violations within established timeframes. Parks attendance increased by 53.1% to 67,030 patrons in excess of their 8% goal.
- Staff worked with the County Public Information Officer to educate the public on ordinance requirements, common zoning violations and how to report them through newspaper articles, the County's e-newsletter, and the web site.
- New forms were created on the Internet to allow citizens to report junk vehicle and zoning violations.
- Parks staff delivered educational programming to 9,026 patrons in excess of their goal of 800.

## **PLANNING & ZONING**

### **Statement of Purpose**

Conduct a comprehensive planning program, including the administration of the Unified Development Ordinance, which is designed to promote and maintain the orderly physical growth and development of Catawba County which serves to improve the quality of life for its citizens. Facilitate and provide staff support for the development of short and long-range planning initiatives with subsequent implementation of the plan's policies and recommendations. Provide information and consultation on matters of planning and development to the Board of Commissioners, Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, Subdivision Review Board, Parks Advisory Committee, County departments, development community and general public.

### **Outcomes**

1. Provide quality customer service by expeditiously and accurately reviewing development related requests/projects through the:
  - a. Processing of all rezoning requests and preparation of report(s) and recommendation(s) for submittal to the Planning Board 7-10 days prior to the scheduled public hearing. Recommendations from the Planning Board to the Board of Commissioners will be forwarded after the public hearing.
  - b. Reviewing and approving of complete non-residential site plans within ten (10) working days by independently reviewing plans and serving as a member of a technical review team to comprehensively review non-residential site plans and coordinate comments.
  - c. Reviewing and approving of completed applications for residential zoning permits in coordination with the Permit Center for questionable situations (i.e. floodplain, topography, setback issues) within two (2) working days.
  - d. Reviewing of special use, variance and nonconforming applications with submittal of staff reports to the Board of Adjustment within 45 days of receipt of complete application.
  - e. Reviewing of preliminary and final major subdivision plats and field checking final subdivisions for drainage, street layout, and other required improvements as specified in the Unified Development Ordinance within ten (10) working days of application date and providing reports to the Subdivision Review Board.
  - f. Reviewing of minor and family subdivision plats to ensure compliance with the Unified Development Ordinance within ten (10) working days.
2. Ensure management and elected officials have the necessary background, technical reports and staff recommendations to make informed decisions on planning matters by:
  - a. Serving on Boards established to improve transportation and transit in the

County. Board membership includes: Metropolitan Planning Organization, Rural Planning Organization, Unifour Regional Transportation Authority (alternate), and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan Steering Committee.

- b. Serving on Boards established to improve environmental quality and quality of life in the County in order to promote tourism and economic development. Board membership includes: the Catawba River Study Committee, Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition, Lake Norman Marine Commission, Foothills Conservancy, Carolina Thread Trail Advisory Council, Unifour Recreation and Open Space Task Force/Subcommittee and Unifour Air Quality Committee.
  - c. Ensuring that appropriate agencies and elected officials have current information on school capacity based on new subdivision lots approved through the submittal of quarterly reports to appropriate agencies and elected officials. This information, in addition to the Western Piedmont Council of Government's (WPCOG's) Growth Estimation Model, is used in part to establish priorities for future school additions or new construction.
3. Provide additional levels of public safety, reduce property loss, and minimize community disruption from the effects of natural hazards by updating the County's Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. An updated plan will also evaluate the opportunity to maximize the Community Rating System credit points under the National Flood Insurance Program which could potentially help lower flood insurance rates for citizens in the County. The updated plan will be presented to the Board of Commissioners for adoption by October 2009 with subsequent submittal to North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCDEM) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for final approval prior to expiration of the 5-year mandatory update deadline in April 2010.
4. Increase affordable housing opportunities and ensure safe housing for low-to-moderate income persons by administering the following grants, with assistance by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG):
  - a. Scattered Site CDBG – rehabilitate 10-12 substandard units owned by low/moderate income elderly homeowners through a \$400,000 grant.
  - b. Urgent Repair CDBG - provide minor repair for 12 housing units owned by low/moderate income elderly homeowners through a \$75,000 grant.
  - c. Individual Development Account (IDA) CDBG - provide down-payment assistance to 5 first-time homeowners through a \$70,000 grant for the Unifour.
5. Improve quality of life opportunities for County citizens, promote tourism and economic development, and retain segments of rural character and wildlife habitat in the County as identified during the community-based small area planning and the Parks Master Plan through the preservation of natural areas in the County. This will be achieved by:
  - a. Coordinating with the Foothills Conservancy to identify potential preservation

- areas on the Jacobs Fork River and/or other sites near the County's parks for consideration of acquisition or conservation easements through grants.
  - b. Obtaining funding for acquisition, design and construction of improvements to the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge site.
  - c. Coordinating with local conservancies to identify grant sources to acquire/develop the recreational offerings contained in Duke Power's Comprehensive Relicensing Agreement, such as the final acquisition of the Mtn. Creek tract on Lake Norman.
  - d. Implementing recommendations of the County's Parks Master Plan and the Greater Hickory Recreation/Tourism Plan.
- 6. Ensure that the newly adopted Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is a fluid and user friendly document for the development community by:
  - a. Soliciting stakeholders, citizens, management and elected officials' concerns through a periodic review conducted by staff. Staff will make recommendations for amendments to the Board of Commissioners based on input and experiences with the ordinance over a 12-15 month period.
  - b. Developing non-technical supporting manuals, such as a landscape design manual, which assist developers in complying with the ordinance.
- 7. Ensure that the U.S. Census Bureau obtains an accurate population count for Catawba County during its decennial 2010 census in order to receive equitable federal monies for government-supported programs and provide accurate demographic data for planning purposes. The planning department will cooperate with the U.S. Census Bureau in its Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program through the evaluation of feedback materials and the processing of appeals identified during the review process.
- 8. Improve traffic movement on NC Highway 150 by expediting the widening process through the development of coordinated land use standards and regulations incorporated by Catawba, Iredell and Lincoln counties. Staff will coordinate with Iredell and Lincoln County planners in the development of a unified set of development standards which can be adopted by each local government in order to lessen traffic congestion and provide quality, coordinated development along the corridor.
- 9. Provide educational outreach to property owners about bonafide farming activities in the County in order to reduce the impacts of conflicting uses through the development of a voluntary agricultural district (VAD) program. The draft VAD ordinance presented to the Board of Commissioners in 2005 will be reviewed and revised, taking into consideration comments received from the Catawba County Farm Bureau. The amended ordinance will be presented to the Board of Commissioners for consideration during the first half of Fiscal Year 2008/09.

10. Ensure that the quality of life amenities and safety improvements which are required of Crescent Resources and Key Harbor as part of the executed development agreement are completed through the monitoring by planning staff to ensure compliance with the agreement.
11. Improve customer service by providing user-friendly, accurate information to the public regarding planning functions and activities through an updated Planning Department web site.



## **PARKS**

### **Statement of Purpose**

Provide recreational opportunities for the citizens of Catawba County through the operation and development of parks and the preservation of open space. Environmental education and the preservation of Catawba County's unique natural heritage are the primary goals of the Parks Division.

### **Outcomes**

1. Increase the Parks Division daily attendance average by 10% as evidenced by traffic counter statistics/sign-in sheets and the quarterly Parks Division reports. This will be achieved by ensuring that 98% of all prescribed daily maintenance and operational duties are performed satisfactorily as evidenced by inspection by the Parks Manager. Attendance will also be increased by the individual efforts of all park staff to fully explore and execute all available resources relating to the public media and scheduled public events hosted by the Parks Division. The daily attendance log indicating such events will evidence this. Particular effort will be placed on outreach to civic, volunteer, and educational organizations. These organizations will include such groups as Girl and Boy Scouts, Church Groups, YMCA, Non –profits, and educational institutions such as North Carolina Public Schools, Catawba Valley Community College (CVCC), Catawba County Schools, and Lenoir Rhyne College.
2. Achieve 500 volunteer labor hours by completing a minimum of four parks improvement projects. The primary goal of this outcome is to promote civic and environmental stewardship education while reducing operating cost and further developing the goals regarding the preservation of Catawba County Park's facilities. The secondary goal of these improvement projects will be environmental/interpretive education and community involvement. In an effort to involve youth, these projects will include school and scouting groups when possible. This will be completed as evidenced by the volunteer/project log, sign-in sheets, and the quarterly Parks Division report.
3. Host educational/interpretive programs with no less than 800 patron participants as evidenced by daily sign-in sheets. The goal of these programs is to share environmental/interpretive information with the public in an effort to broaden public awareness and participation in the preservation of Catawba County's unique natural heritage.
4. The Parks Division will assist in the development of the St Stephens Park facility and Bunker Hill Covered Bridge to improve accessibility and amenities at the sites. Staff will also research additional grant opportunities and apply for appropriate grants as approved by the Catawba County Board of Commissioners. The purpose of these grants will be to fully develop site amenities and preserve the natural and historical integrity of the sites. The goal is to have the St Stephens Park facility opened to the public by January of Fiscal Year 2008/09.